

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-11, 13-21, and 23-28 are pending. Claim 1 has been amended and new claim 28 has been added to recite additional features of the invention.

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner maintained the rejection of claims 1,2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17-21, and 23-27 under 35 USC § 102(e) for being anticipated by the Sasaki patent. In order to anticipate this claim, the Sasaki patent must disclose every feature recited in these claims. There can be no exceptions.

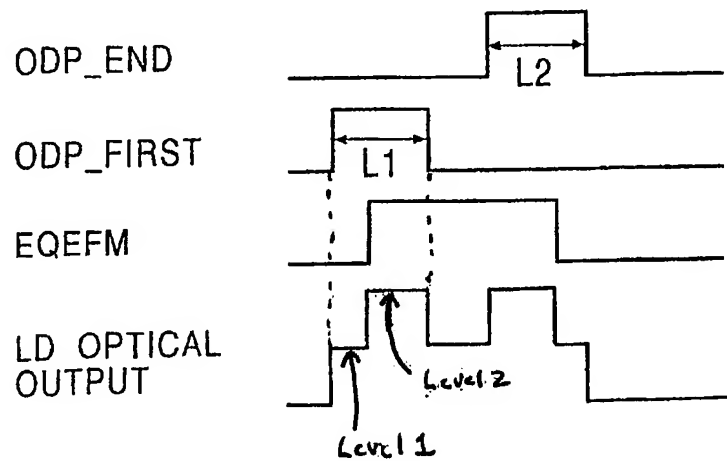
Claim 1 recites a control circuit for generating a main pulse and a sub-pulse for the driving signal. The sub pulse has a prescribed width that at least partially overlaps the main pulse. The sub pulse is generated a prescribed amount of time prior to generating the main pulse, where the prescribed amount of time corresponds to a portion of a duty ratio of the timing signal. (By way of illustration, these features are shown in the non-limiting embodiment of Figure 9, which shows that sub-pulse (LDH) is generated before the main pulse (PEO). The amount of time sub-pulse LDH is generated before main pulse PEO includes the time period T_a , which corresponds to the portion of a duty cycle of the timing signal.)

In addition to these features, claim 1 recites that “the driving signal rises substantially to a first level during the prescribed amount of time prior to when the main pulse is generated, and the driving signal maintains substantially said first level for a remaining time of the prescribed width of the sub pulse.” (These features are also shown in the illustrative embodiment of Figure 9).

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner maintained that Sasaki discloses these features on grounds that while driving signal LD OPTICAL OUTPUT does not stay at the same level in Figure 7, it maintains the level it first achieves when the sub-pulse OSP_FIRST is applied. Applicants submit that this is simply not true.

The Sasaki patent discloses generating an EQEFM signal as a main pulse and an ODP_FIRST signal as a sub pulse. As shown in Figure 7, the sub pulse signal is generated prior to the main pulse and also overlaps the main pulse. Using the main pulse and the sub-pulse, Sasaki generates an LD driving signal, e.g., LD OPTICAL OUTPUT. However, this driving signal is not generated in the same way as recited in claim 1.

Claim 1 recites that the driving signal rises substantially to a first level during the prescribed amount of time prior to when the main pulse is generated, and “the driving signal maintains substantially said first level for a remaining time of the prescribed width of the sub pulse.” The Sasaki patent simply does not disclose these features as alleged by the Examiner. These differences are clear from Figure 7, which has been reproduced below.



As shown in Figure 7, sub-pulse ODP_FIRST causes the LD driving signal to rise to a first level (L1) between the time period between the rising edge of the sub-pulse and the rising edge of the main pulse EQEFM. However, unlike claim 1, the level L1 is **not maintained** for the remaining duration of the sub-pulse. Rather, the rising edge of the main pulse causes the LD driving signal to increase to a substantially higher level, namely L2.

As a consequence of these differences, the driving signal of claim 1 will rise more rapidly and smoothly than the driving signal of Sasaki (compare, e.g., Figure 9 of Applicants' drawings to Figure 7 of Sasaki), to thereby cause the invention of claim 1 to achieve comparatively better performance during a write operation.

Based on the foregoing comparison, Applicants submit that the Sasaki patent does not disclose all the features of claim 1 and therefore does not anticipate this claim or any of its dependent claims. Withdrawal of the § 102 rejection and furtherance of claim 1 and its dependent claims to allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 8, 11, and 21 recite features similar to those which patentably distinguish claim 1 from the Sasaki patent. Based on these features, it is respectfully submitted that claims 8, 11, 21, and their dependent claims are allowable over the Sasaki patent.

To further differentiate the invention of claim 1 from Sasaki, new claim 28 has been added to recite that "the driving signal maintains substantially the first level throughout the duration of the main pulse." In contrast, the LD driving signal of Sasaki does not maintain a substantially constant level throughout the duration of main pulse EQEFM. Rather, the Sasaki

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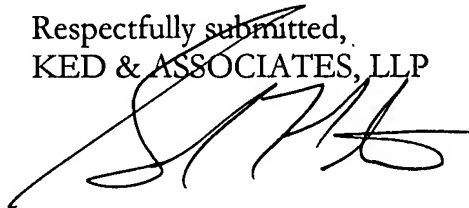
driving signal transitions from level L2 back to level L1 at the falling edge of sub-pulse ODP_FIRST. Applicants submit that claim 28 is allowable for these additional reasons.

Claims 3, 6, and 9 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) for being obvious in view of a Sasaki-Yokoi combination. This rejection is traversed on grounds that the Yokoi patent fails to teach or suggest the features of base claims 1 and 8 missing from the Sasaki patent.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and timely allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR § 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
KED & ASSOCIATES, LLP



Daniel Y.J. Kim
Registration No. 36,186

Samuel W. Ntiros
Registration No. 39,318

P.O. Box 221200
Chantilly, Virginia 20153-1200
703 766-3777 DYK/SWN/kzw

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Please direct all correspondence to Customer Number 34610